



MONUMENT

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

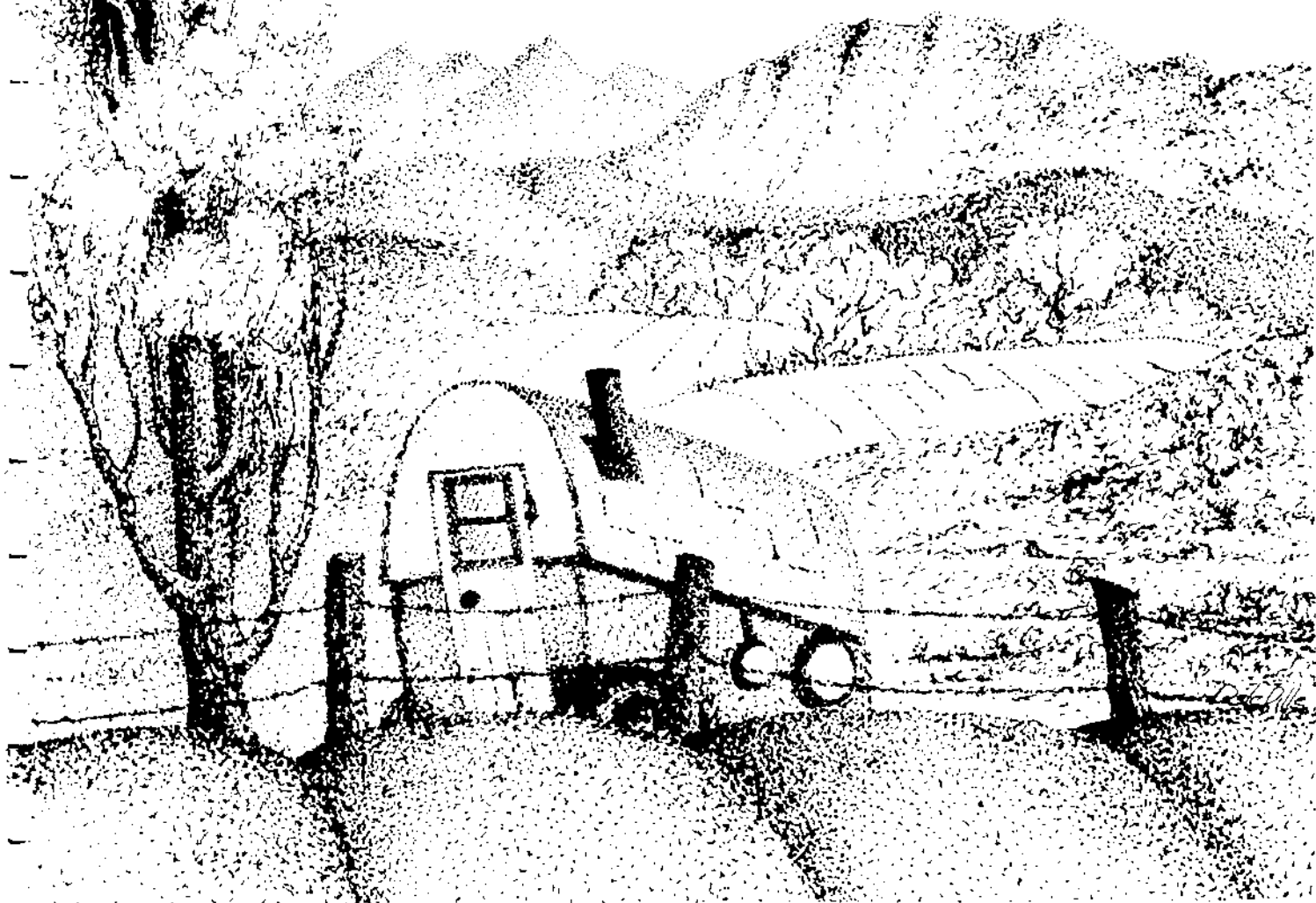
DRAFT

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

SHOSHONE DISTRICT, IDAHO

April 1984



NOTICE TO READER

Please retain your copy of this draft RMP/EIS for future reference. The final document may be published in an abbreviated form, including only corrections and/or additions to this draft and public comments with BLM responses.



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Shoshone District

P.O. Box 2B

Shoshone, Idaho 83352

IN REPLY
REFER TO: 1601

April 30, 1984

Enclosed is a copy of the draft Monument Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (RMP/EIS) for your review and comment. This document presents four alternative plans, and one sub-alternative, for managing the public lands in the Monument Planning Area. These alternatives are designed to resolve the planning issues identified earlier with the help of you, the public. I invite you to help us develop a plan by commenting on this draft.

Comments on the RMP/EIS should be sent to Ervin Cowley, Project Manager, Bureau of Land Management, P. O. Box 2 B, Shoshone, Idaho 83352. Comments should be received at this address by August 9, 1984.

For those who would like to present testimony on the draft RMP/EIS, a formal public hearing will be held in Shoshone on June 20, 1984. More information about the hearing is attached to this letter.

All comments received by August 9, 1984, and testimony received at the hearing will be considered in preparation of the final RMP/EIS. The proposed plan presented in the final RMP/EIS may be one of the alternatives included in the draft, or a modification of one of the alternatives. Your comments will help us choose a plan for managing your public lands.

Sincerely,

Charles J. Haszler
District Manager

Attachments

Monument Draft RMP/EIS
Hearing Registration Form
Public Hearing Information

ERRATA: Map F-7 in Appendix F of the draft is incorrect. The corrected Map F-7 is attached to this letter.

MONUMENT RMP
PUBLIC HEARING INFORMATION

Location and Time

June 20, 1984 at 7:30 p.m. MDT
Lincoln Elementary School
210 West 4th
Shoshone, Idaho

Purpose

The hearing will allow individuals to present testimony on the draft Monument RMP/EIS. The hearing is required for the wilderness recommendations in the document, but testimony on the adequacy of the draft RMP/EIS is encouraged. Testimony presented at the hearing will be used, along with other comments received during the public comment period, in the preparation of the final RMP/EIS.

Hearing Procedures

The public hearing proceedings will be conducted by a hearing leader. The hearing leader, or BLM personnel recognized by the leader, may question witnesses for the purpose of clarifying points in the testimony. All proceedings of the hearing will be recorded for use in preparation of the final RMP/EIS.

Oral Statements

Oral testimony will be limited to 10 minutes per speaker. Those wishing to testify should complete the attached registration form and return it to the Shoshone District BLM by June 15, 1984. Participants may also register to speak at the registration desk at the hearing. Speakers will be called in the order that registrations are received. After the last witness has testified, the hearing leader will consider the request of any other person present wishing to testify. Anyone may testify as a private citizen, but only one witness will be allowed to represent the views of an organization.

Written Statements

Written statements intended to supplement oral testimony may be submitted during the hearing. Of course, the Shoshone District will accept written statements at any time during the public comment period ending August 9, 1984 regardless of whether oral testimony is received at the hearing.

General

Witnesses must direct their testimony to the contents of the document and to specific aspects of the alternatives and environmental analysis.

MONUMENT RMP

PUBLIC HEARING REGISTRATION FORM

If you would like to testify at the public hearing on the draft Monument RMP/EIS, please complete this form and mail it to the following address by June 15, 1984.

Ervin Cowley, Project Manager
Bureau of Land Management
P. O. Box 2 B
Shoshone, ID 83352

(Please Print)

Name _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Representing _____

I wish to appear at the public hearing at Lincoln Elementary School in Shoshone on June 20, 1984, to express my views.

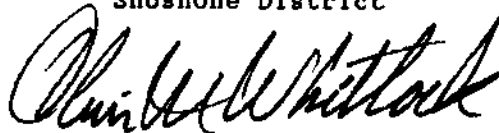
I intend to submit written documentation. () Yes () No

Signature

MONUMENT RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN
and
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
(DRAFT)

Blaine, Butte, Gooding, Jerome, Lincoln, Minidoka, and Power Counties
State of Idaho

Prepared by
Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Shoshone District



State Director, Idaho

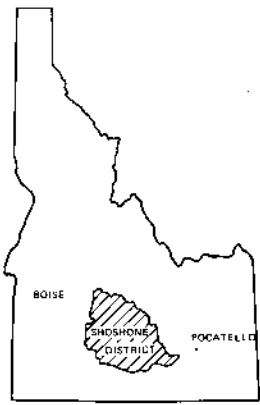
This draft resource management plan and environmental impact statement describes and analyzes four alternative plans (and one sub-alternative) for managing 1,178,989 acres of public land in the Monument and Bennett Hills resource areas in the Shoshone District. Alternative A would continue present management. Alternative B would favor higher livestock stocking levels, more range improvements, agricultural development, and transfer of isolated or difficult to manage parcels out of Federal ownership. Alternative C, the Preferred Alternative, would pursue a balanced approach to multiple use, allowing production and use of commodity resources and commercial use authorization while protecting fragile resources and wildlife habitat, preserving natural systems and cultural values, and allowing for nonconsumptive resource uses. Alternative D would favor habitat management to increase wildlife populations, protection of cultural resources, protection of wilderness qualities, and opportunities for general dispersed recreation. Sub-Alternative D would be the same as Alternative D except that there would be no livestock grazing.

For further information contact Ervin Cowley, Project Manager
Bureau of Land Management, P. O. Box 2 B, Shoshone, Idaho 83352
Telephone (208) 886-2206

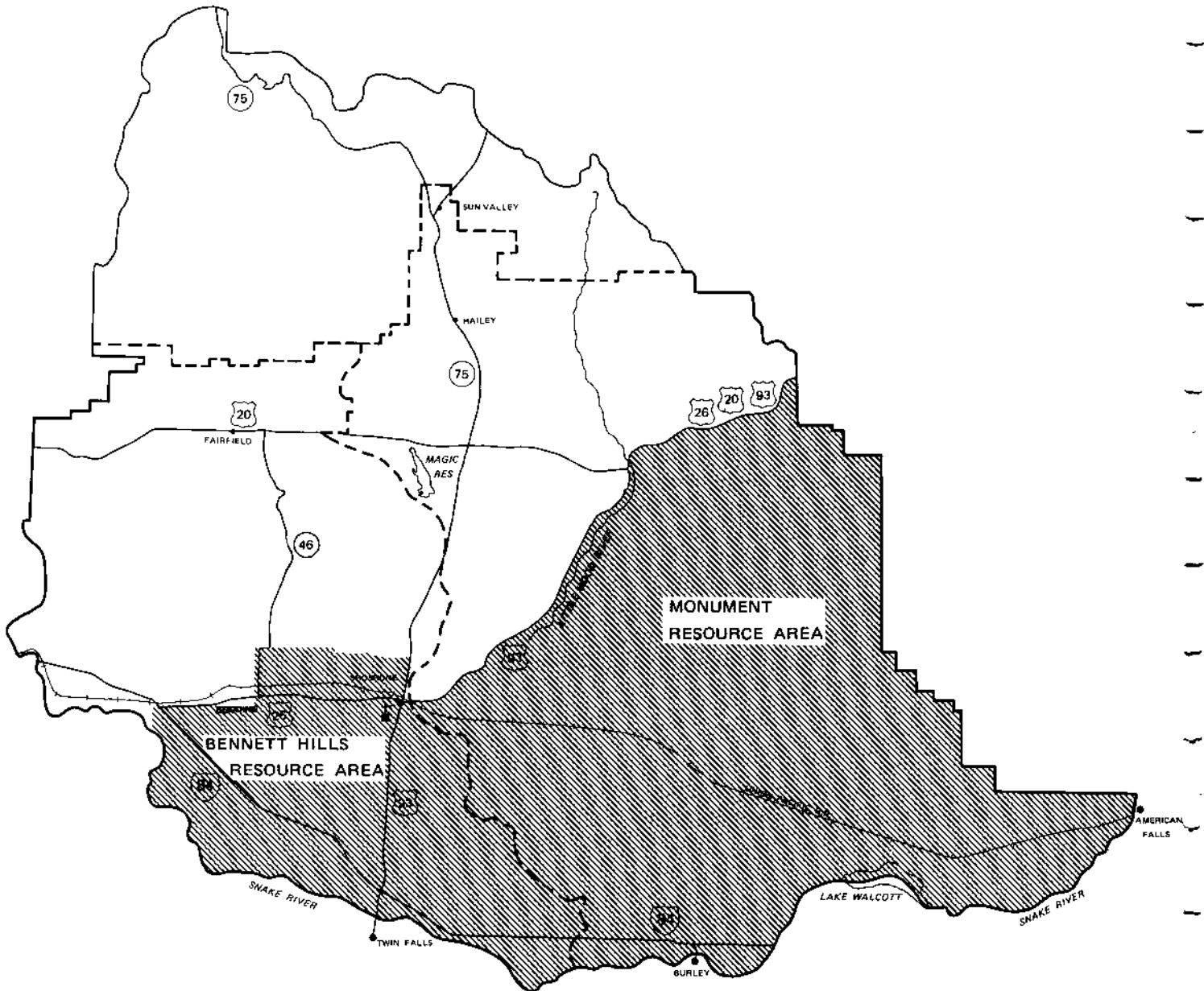
Comments should be submitted to the above address by

MONUMENT RMP LOCATION MAP

- SHOSHONE DISTRICT
- - - RESOURCE AREA BOUNDARIES
- ▨ MONUMENT PLANNING AREA



IDAHO KEY



SUMMARY

The Monument Resource Management Plan (RMP) is being prepared to provide the Bureau of Land Management, Shoshone District Office with a comprehensive framework for managing 1,178,989 acres of BLM-administered public land in the Monument Planning Area (see facing map) over the next 15 to 20 years. With increasing demands for various resources, prudent stewardship of the public lands simply can no longer be accomplished without comprehensive land use planning. This document includes a draft environmental impact statement (EIS) which addresses a BLM-preferred RMP, three alternative RMPs, and one sub-alternative. Each of the alternatives reflects key public land issues identified through public participation. The Preferred Alternative reflects BLM's effort to resolve resource conflicts and ensure that the public lands are managed in accordance with principles of multiple use and sustained yield.

Issues

The following planning issues were identified through public participation for the Monument Planning Area.

Lands - Retention or Disposal

1. Which lands should be made available for agricultural development?
2. Should lands with severe erosion hazards in the Lake Walcott area be developed for agriculture?
3. Which lands should be retained for livestock movement purposes between allotments?
4. Should isolated parcels of public lands in agricultural areas be retained for wildlife habitat values?
5. Which lands should be available for private and State exchanges?
6. What access should be provided to public lands?

Wilderness

1. Which wilderness study areas should be recommended suitable for wilderness designation?

Livestock Grazing

1. What is the current carrying capacity of allotments for livestock grazing?
2. Which allotments will have intensive management through the development of allotment management plans or coordinated resource management plans?
3. Will conversions from sheep AUMs to cattle AUMs be allowed and what will be the rate of conversion?
4. What seasons of use for livestock grazing will be allowed?
5. Are there areas where there should be no livestock grazing?

Range Improvements

1. How much brush control and seeding will be completed?
2. What will be the constraints on brush control and seeding?
3. What other improvements are needed to improve livestock management?

Fire Management

1. How can the size and frequency of wildfires be reduced to lessen impacts on wildlife habitat, soil erosion, and livestock grazing?
2. How will prescribed fire be used?

Soil Erosion

1. Will agricultural development cause accelerated wind erosion in the fragile soils in the Lake Walcott area?
2. Will resource uses cause accelerated erosion in the future on erosion-susceptible areas?

Wildlife Habitat Management

1. Which public lands should be retained and managed for terrestrial wildlife habitat?
2. What actions will be taken to manage wildlife habitat?
3. What riparian areas should be protected?
4. How should habitat for sensitive, threatened and endangered, and candidate wildlife and plant species be managed?

Minerals

1. Which areas should be retained to provide mineral materials (sand, gravel, cinders, and top soil) for private and local and State government use?
2. Which areas should be retained because of locatable mineral values?
3. Should there be restrictions on oil, gas, and geothermal activities?

Lands for Local and State Government and Other Needs

1. Which lands should be made available for local government needs such as land fills, parks, and flood control?
2. Should the National Guard be allowed to use areas for military training?
3. Should other uses be allowed, such as hydro-power plants, roads, and powerlines?

Off-Road Vehicles (ORVs)

1. Should off-road vehicles be allowed to use the erosion-susceptible areas in the Lake Walcott area?
2. Should any areas be closed to ORV use?
3. Should specific ORV use areas be designated and/or developed?

Recreation

1. Should areas be designated for intensive recreation use?
2. What unique areas should be protected?

Cultural and Historic Values

1. Should areas be closed or restricted to other uses to protect cultural resources?

Alternatives

The four alternative plans addressed in this document each address the planning issues in a different way.

Alternative A

The "No Action" alternative would continue present management direction. Most of the Monument Planning Area is not currently covered by an approved land use plan. Therefore, resource use levels for Alternative A were established by examining recent use levels and projected trends. Management direction for a portion of the southwest corner of the planning area would be provided by the existing Canyon Management Framework Plan (MFP). This MFP covers less than 3 percent of the BLM-administered public land in the planning area.

Resource use levels would generally remain the same as present levels in Alternative A. For example, livestock grazing levels would remain at present average actual use levels. No conversions from sheep use to cattle use would be allowed except where specifically addressed in an existing AMP. The number of Isolated Tracts managed for wildlife would stay at present levels.

Minor changes from the present could occur in Alternative A. Management actions required to implement an existing activity plan could be accomplished. New uses, such as communications sites, rights-of-way, and landfills could occur subject to environmental review.

Alternative B

This alternative would favor production and use of commodity resources and commercial use authorization. Management direction would favor higher livestock stocking levels, more range improvements, land disposal for agricultural development, and transfer of isolated or difficult to manage parcels out of Federal ownership. Restrictions on mining, mineral leasing, mineral material removal, and off-road vehicle use would be minimized.

Alternative C

This is BLM's Preferred Alternative. A variety of resource uses would be allowed. Production and use of commodity resources and commercial use authorization would occur, while protecting fragile resources and wildlife habitat, preserving natural systems and cultural values, and allowing for nonconsumptive resource uses. A balanced approach to multiple use would be pursued. Resource use levels would be within the range set by Alternatives B and D.

Alternative D

In this alternative, protection of fragile resources and wildlife habitat, preservation of natural systems and cultural values, and nonconsumptive resource uses would be favored. Management direction would favor habitat management to increase wildlife populations, protection of cultural resources, protection of wilderness qualities, and opportunities for general dispersed recreation.

Sub-Alternative D

Proposed resource uses in Sub-Alternative D would be the same as for Alternative D in all respects except there would be no livestock grazing. Therefore, no grazing preference would be proposed and no range improvements would be accomplished.

Alternative C is BLM's Preferred Alternative for the Monument RMP. The Preferred Alternative would allow for agricultural development, livestock grazing, range improvements, mineral exploration and development, and ORV use, but at levels that would protect other important resources. The highest quality wilderness study areas would be recommended suitable for designation. Sensitive, threatened and endangered, and candidate species would benefit as would upland game birds. Big game and non-game species populations would decline, but only slightly. Recreation use would continue to increase. Important natural history resources would be preserved. ORV restrictions would benefit cultural resources, soils, and scenic values. Measures to limit wildfire would benefit soils and wildlife. Soil erosion would be at tolerable levels. The Preferred Alternative would also benefit the local economy significantly.

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NOTE: Maps 1 through 19 are fold-out maps at the back of this document.
Maps F1 through F8 are located at the back of Appendix F.